



Club member who made the supreme sacrifice 1914-1919

The Story Behind the Name



Major William Ernest MARKWELL DSO MID

23 December 1889 - 31 October 1917



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PRE-ENLISTMENT:

- William was born on 23 December 1889 at Beaudesert to parents, John and Agnes MARKWELL
- He was educated at Beaudesert State School and Southport High School
- His occupation at time of enlistment was that of a grazier living at Kargorum, Beaudesert
- His next of kin was recorded as his father, John Markwell, also of Kargorum, Beaudesert
- He had previously served 4 years with the 2nd Light Horse as a Captain

SERVICE:

- Service Number: Officer
- William MARKWELL enlisted on 19 August 1914 as a Captain in Brisbane, Qld aged 24 years
- On 24 September 1914 he embarked with 2nd Light Horse Regiment, on the A15 'Star of England' from Brisbane for Egypt and disembarked at Alexandria
- On 9 May 1915 he embarked from Alexandria and on 12 May 1915 he was involved with ANZAC/ Gallipoli where he remained until evacuation at Anzac then returned to Egypt
- On 11 October 1915 at Gallipoli he was officially promoted Major
- On 14 November 1915 he went with the 2nd Light Horse with detachment to Mudros
- On 26/27 December 1915 he with the 2nd Light Horse disembarked from the front at Alexandria, then proceeded to Warden, Heliopolis on 14 January 1916
- From 15 to 26 June 1916 he assumed command of the Romani Regiment temporarily as a Major
- He, with the 2nd Light Horse, were detached to the 1st Light Horse Brigade Headquarters at Romani on 31 August 1916
- On 13 October 1916 he was Mentioned in Dispatches (MID)
- On 29 October he was assigned to the Imperial School of Instruction, Zeitoun in North Egypt until 19 November returning to duty with 2nd Light Horse from Bir-el-Arnussi.
- On 23 December 1916 he was involved in fighting covering Magdhaba
- On 19 February 1917 he was appointed temporary Lt Col whilst commanding Major G.H. Bourne was invalided
- On 6 March 1917 he was awarded the Distinguished Service Order
- On 18 March 1917 he was again Mentioned in Dispatches
- On 31 August he returned to the School of Instruction returning on 15 October
- Major William MARKWELL was Killed in Action, in the Battle of Beersheba, Palestine on 31 October 1917, aged 27 year





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RECOGNITION FOR GALLANTRY:

- The Distinguished Service Order Recommendation was made for Major William E Markwell of the 2nd Light Horse Regiment at Maghdaba on 23 December 1916 for

“the gallant manner in which he pushed the position on the second ridge and led the final assault against the trenches and the redoubt on this ridge, thereby completing the defeat of the enemy positions covering Magdhaba from the west”. 23/12/1916.

(located on Sinai Peninsula, Egypt). Recommended by Major G.H. Bourne, endorsed by Brigadier General.

- The Distinguished Service Order was presented to Major Markwell on 6 May 1917.



CEMETERY &/OR MEMORIAL:

- Cemetery: Beersheba Military Cemetery, (Row D, Grave No. 55), Palestine
- Memorials: Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour, Panel Number 3
- Beaudesert War Memorial,
- United Service Club

MILITARY HONOURS & AWARDS:

- Mentioned in Dispatches
- Distinguished Service Order
- 1914/15 Star
- British War Medal
- Victory Medal

for his War service in Egypt, Gallipoli, Palestine



RIFLE SHOOTING:

- William Ernest MARKWELL was on of 40 Foundation Members of the Beaudsert Rifle Club in its early days, but when he joined the Light Horse he drifted out of rifle shooting. 'He possessed plenty of pluck, and rather more than a usual amount of dash.'

ARMISTICE CENTENARY WAR MEMORIAL

Commemoration Service



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RIFLE SHOOTING IN EGYPT

Queensland Times (Ipswich, Qld. : 1909 - 1954), Wed 17 Feb 1915, Page 6

QUEENSLAND TEAM'S SUCCESS.

The following (writes a correspondent) is an account of a rifle match, which was fired on the Ma'adi rifle range last Friday (January 16) between teams from the Cairo British R.C. and one selected from the 2nd A.L.H. Regiment. Most of the Queenslanders are well known in shooting circles, and can still uphold their reputation away from home under adverse conditions. After a hard afternoon's troop drill, and using the short service rifle on a very windy day, their scores compare favourably with those of their opponents, who were using the Molit Le. E. and Ross rifles. The ranges were 200, 500, and 600 yards, and the figure target was used throughout. Shooting at 600 yards was very difficult. The scores were as follows:-

CAIRO BRITISH R.C.

Mr. Hurst.....	29	28	28	85
Mr. Coy.....	23	25	28	77
Mr. Tadman.....	30	27	27	84
Mr. Richards	26	30	22	78
Mr. Ablett.....	22	32	27	81
Mr. Shoebridge ..	28	31	30	89
Mr. Shearer.....	32	28	27	89
Mr. Craig	29	28	32	89
Team Total.....				672
Counted out.				
Mr. Lake	28	17	17	62
Mr. Wood	25	29	21	75

2nd A.L.H.

M. A. Weeks	28	32	27	87
R. H. Campbell	26	28	27	81
E.J.Ubank	30	27	23	79
Capt. W. E. Markwell....	31	30	28	89
L.Cpl. D. Heenan	32	30	25	87
S. M. Taylor.....	28	30	26	87
J. Swinton.....	27	32	21	80
J. Durham.....	32	31	23	86
Team Total.....				676
Counted out.				
W. C. Hines.....	24	23	24	71
Capt. A. M. Nash	24	21	25	70

Light refreshments were provided on the range by the Cairo team. Capt. Nash, on behalf of the Queenslanders, said it was a pleasure to meet and beat such sportsmen as they had met that day. He hoped to be able to give them an opportunity, in the near future, of trying to regain their lost laurels. Three cheers were heartily given for the Cairo team. Mr. Craig, the Cairo Club's secretary, and an old Bisley shot, complimented the winners on their scores they had put up under such trying conditions. He had met Australians at home and abroad, and found that their general principles were like their shooting, hard to beat. He called for three rousing British cheers for the Light Horse team, which were heartily given.



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PERSONAL NOTES

The Brisbane Courier (Qld. : 1864 - 1933) Wed 7 Nov 1917, Page 7

Major and Acting Lieutenant-Colonel W. E. Markwell, D. S. O., son of Mr. and Mrs. John Markwell, of Kargaron, Beaudesert, has been killed in action in Palestine, thus ending a distinguished military career. He left Queensland with the first contingent as a captain in the 2nd Light Horse Regiment, commanded by Colonel R. Stodart who had with him such well known and honoured Officers as Major Glasgow (now Brigadier-General), Logan, Graham (killed in action), and Bourne (afterwards Lieut-Colonel and D. S. O.) At the opening of the Gallipoli campaign the regiment volunteered for infantry work and arrived at the Peninsula a few days after the famous landing. As is the case of all other units, the months of strenuous work in the trenches claimed its heavy toll of the regiment, but Major (then Captain) Markwell was one of the very few who escaped both injury and illness. He received his crown on the battlefield at the early age of 24. On returning to Egypt the regiment was reorganized and placed for arduous desert work under General Chauvel, work which culminated in such famous victories as Romani, El Arish, Magdhaba and Rafa. It was for conspicuous work on these fields that Major Markwell earned the D.S.O. At that time the gallant young soldier had the rather unique record of having served 2 1/2 years on active service without once having to leave the regiment through illness or injury. In a letter received from a chaplain at the Front about that time the following reference to Major Markwell appeared: "He led the final attack the other day in fine style, and his example went a long way towards making the charge as irresistible as it proved to be."

**The Late Major W. E. Markwell, D.S.
The Beaudesert Times (Qld. : 1908 - 1954), Fri 15 Feb 1918, Page 2**

The following is a copy of a letter received by Mrs Markwell from the Rev. John Boardman, Church of England Chaplain to the 1st Brigade, A.L.H, Palestine, in reference to the death of Major Markwell D S.O. at Beersheba, Palestine:

"My dear Mrs Markwell, I have delayed writing to you because we have been so very busy, and I did not feel I could write while we were so hurried; but the push is at present over for a time, but not finished for us, but finished for your dear boy, Willie. He died lending his men into action. One sudden shot and it was all over. He did not suffer at all, and thank God we have no fear of his eternal welfare, for he was not only a good soldier, but a good clean man, who loved and feared God. He stayed for the Holy Communion the very last Sunday we had service, and he was always such a help to me. In order that I should have a decent service he gave me his own camp table for Communion Service, and a Union Jack Flag to cover it. I shall always keep them in memory of him. Do not fret for him, and ask Mr Markwell not to, but just prepare to meet him at the Great Reunion, and be like David was when his son was taken, and said 'I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.' We laid him to rest with full military honours, in the presence of nearly all the Brigade officers, including General Cox, in a large gum forest (Australian trees) just west of Beersheba, on the 2nd November. It was truly remarked that we could ill afford to lose such men as he was for he was one of the finest officers in the whole division. The army has lost one of the best officers, and you have lost a noble son, and I have lost a friend. With deepest sympathy. Yours sincerely, John Boardman, C. of E Chaplain."



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A LETTER HOME FROM A SCHOOL PAL

The Late Major Markwell, D.S.O.

The following interesting letter was received by Mr and Mrs J. Markwell from Private J. W. Mitchell Anyon, of the New Zealand Mounted Corp, Palestine. Private Anyon is a son of Mrs Mitchell, of Palen Creek, and enlisted from New Zealand in the early days of the war. In his young days he went to school with the late Major Markwell, and that fact makes his letter very interesting:—

"Mother sent me the Beaudesert 'Times' and 'twas with deep regret I read of Willie's death. Please accept my deepest sympathy. He was my class mate; he, W. Fuller, and I were always first, second, or third in the class. Willie and I used to play soldiers on Saturday afternoons; little did we dream that he was going to prove so brave a soldier and a man. After leaving school I lost touch with Willie, as I went up North Queensland. After a few years there I went to New Zealand and joined the forces, 3 years ago. We came off Gallipoli for a spell to Lemnos Island, and the 2nd Light Horse was there for a spell also. Mother wrote and said Willie was Captain in them, so I made off to see if I could find him (never met for 10 years). I picked him out and saluted. He got quite a surprise. 'Jim, old boy, how are you, and what are you doing in New Zealand clothes? Come to my tent for a good yarn.' For three nights we met and talked for hours of our school days and of all the old Beaudesert folk. In fact it made us long for the good old days. That was the last time we met, as we went to Egypt in different transports. The 'Times' said he went through Gallipoli without sickness. Little do they know, and perhaps you don't; he suffered from dysentery, like many of the boys, and refused to leave with doctor's orders; that's the kind of man he was. Dysentery and fever landed me in hospital for 3 months. The boys thought the world of Willie, and he loved them all; he told me so. I could write lots more, but space and time won't allow. I lost two stepbrothers, and all my pals are gone now, and I'm down in the dumps. We must 'carry on' though, and avenge their deaths,"



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KILLED IN ACTION - 31 OCTOBER 1917

PERSONAL NOTES

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Cairns Post (Qld. : 1909 - 1954), Wed 7 Nov 1917,
Page 5

A distinguished military career ends in Palestine



Photograph taken in Palestine, Beersheba

In the foreground is the grave of Major William Ernest Markwell DSO, 2nd Light Horse Regiment of Beaudesert, Qld, killed in action on 31 October 1917. At left rear is the grave of 2866 Trooper Robert Raymond Dawson, 3rd Light Horse Regiment of Morchard, SA, who was killed in action on 31 October 1917, and behind Major Markwell's grave is that of 16135 Private Norman Allen Challis, 4th Field Ambulance, AAMC, of Tamworth, NSW, who died of wounds on 1 November 1917.